

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Budget Legislation March 25, 2004

I commend the House for passing a responsible budget that advances our three highest priorities: defending America, winning the war on terror, and promoting growth and job creation, while cutting the deficit in half within 5 years. I am also pleased that this moves us closer to making

the tax relief for America's workers and families permanent.

I urge the House and Senate to reach agreement quickly and pass a budget based on my principles of funding what's necessary to protect America and keep our economy growing, while restraining spending elsewhere.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception in Boston, Massachusetts March 25, 2004

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be back in Boston. Thank you. *[Laughter]* I spent some quality time here in the seventies—*[laughter]*—mostly in the library at Harvard, of course. *[Laughter]* Well, I spent some quality time here.

I really appreciate the traditions here in Massachusetts. Last weekend I had the honor of participating in one of the city's finest traditions. It was the annual Saint Patrick's Day breakfast in South Boston. I called in. The good senator took my call. Actually, he took Andy Card's call, a great Massachusetts citizen, and Andy handed me the phone. When I called in, I had the feeling they were going to ask me about a Massachusetts politician who had his eye on the White House, so I addressed the issue as directly as possible: I told Mitt the job was filled until 2008.

I'm proud of the job this good man is doing as Governor of this great State. Mitt Romney is a great Governor. And like me, he married very well. *[Laughter]* I'm proud Ann is here with us tonight. Ann, thank you for coming.

And I'm sorry Laura is not here. She is a fabulous First Lady. She is a great wife. She's visiting her mom in Midland,

Texas. Like me, we put our faith in families first, above all. And she is—*[applause]*.

I appreciate my friend Ambassador Dick Egan, for helping make this an incredibly successful fundraiser. The country called, and he responded as the Ambassador to Ireland. He did a fine job on behalf of the citizens of this country. Dick, thank you for your service.

And my old buddy, the former Governor of Massachusetts, Bill Weld is here tonight. I appreciate you coming, Governor. I want to thank all the State officials who are here and local officials who are here. I see the high sheriff and others here today. I want to thank my friend Joe O'Donnell for renting a tie for tonight. *[Laughter]* I appreciate so very much Mercer Reynolds, who is the national finance chairman for my campaign, for taking time out to make sure that we're able to get our message out all across our country.

I want to thank all the people who have worked so hard to really do a fantastic job, when you think about it. We've come to Boston, Massachusetts—some people would think that we wouldn't have much support here. But they're wrong. We've got a lot of support in this city.